

Priority Focus Area 3
Structured Decision Making Model (SDM)
June 2011

The Children's Research Center (CRC) continues to provide training and technical assistance for DCFS staff involved in the SDM project. On April 5th, the CRC provided an individualized training for the state CPS and In-Home Services Program Administrators who have recently been added to the state Program and Practice Improvement Team (PPIT). Another meeting with the CRC and state SDM project staff was held on April 7th via the GoToMeeting link and conference call format. This meeting was used to review changes made to the SDM Risk Assessment and review the SDM Risk Reassessment.

A 3-day SDM workgroup was held on April 19-21. The workgroup was facilitated in-person by three representatives from the CRC: Shannon Flasch, Rod Caskey, and Erin Wicke Dankert. There were approximately 30 participants in the workgroup. Participants included representatives from DCFS regional workers, supervisors, administrators, regional/state office trainers, program specialists, and SAFE representatives. A representative from the state Court Improvement Project also participated. During the workgroup, efforts were made to finalize the draft versions of the SDM Risk Assessment, SDM Risk Reassessment and SDM Reunification Assessments were reviewed and edited by the group.

During the month of May, the CRC facilitated some inter-rater reliability testing on Intake Assessment, Safety Assessment and Risk Assessment. Participants included representatives from Intake, CPS, and the state office. On May 9, 2011, the CRC provided an individualized SDM overview for the Regional Directors and other state administrators as part of the ongoing effort to educate and update statewide administrators.

Throughout the quarter, there have been ongoing coordination and meetings with representatives from SAFE regarding incorporating the SDM documents in SAFE. The decision has been to proceed first with the Safety and Risk Assessments. The hope is to have the documents operational in SAFE before the end of the year.

Throughout the quarter there has been ongoing meetings and information exchanges with the CRC regarding further editing of the SDM policy and procedures. The next major steps in the project include the CRC's completion of the SDM Policy and Procedures Manual. The next major training is scheduled for September which is the Training of the Trainers.